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ABSTRACT

When considering the possibility of setting goals and objectives, library administrators must resolve a number of broad questions as to the time, effort, and commitment required by goal-setting and the utility of such goals to their staff and operations. A description of the goal-setting efforts of ten major libraries illustrates various steps in this process. Many libraries have responded to the challenge of planning by undertaking systematic programs of management analysis. One such program is the Management Review and Analysis Program (MRAP), developed by the Association of Research Libraries. Because most written statements of objectives have been formulated recently, conclusions about their applications and effectiveness can only be tentative. While mission and objective statements have value, a statement that does not include performance goals may risk remaining only a statement of intent. However, because the process of setting performance goals can be costly and time-consuming, very little work has been done to develop explicit goals; and it can be concluded that the use of objectives as a management tool is not yet a fully developed process in library management. (Author/SL)

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REVIEW OF THE FORMULATION AND USE OF OBJECTIVES IN ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES

The concern with setting objectives for organizations is not a new phenomenon but it is one which has come to be appreciated more widely by persons in managerial positions over the past ten or fifteen years. While people and institutions have always engaged in objectives setting, the process has often been informal and unarticulated. But management literature has increasingly emphasized the importance of objectives setting and formal applications appear with greater frequency in both industrial and institutional situations.

Establishing written objectives for the purpose of planning is vital for any organization that wishes to make rational, informed choices among various courses of action. These courses of action may be oriented toward short-term objectives capable of complete accomplishment or they may be directed toward approaching an ideal condition, possibly unattainable in the absolute sense. To be meaningful, however, objectives must be stated realistically, and must take into consideration the various factors which will play a role in their realization—time, human resources, and financial resources to name a few of the more obvious.

The formulation and use of written objectives in research libraries has not been a common practice. In *Problems in University Library Management* (1970), Booz, Allen & Hamilton stated that "library objectives have not been articulated, compiled, and classified as a basis for planning." (p. 25) However, there has been increased interest and activity over the past three years in formulating objectives within academic and research libraries, although many have not gone beyond the formulation of overall objectives to the development of specific performance goals.

This *Supplement* will discuss objectives in the context of the potential for establishing a carefully formulated statement including mission, overall objectives, and performance goals; emphasis is placed on the formulative, or procedural aspects. For the purpose of this discussion the preceding terms will have the following hierarchical values:

Mission: the basic purpose of the organization; the primary reason for its existence

Objectives: statements of long range, broad intent which represent the component means to achieve the mission.

Performance goals: the breakdown of objectives into shorter-range, more specific, frequently quantifiable, desired achievements. Performance goals are usually related to specific library units or functions but can relate to specific positions.

Very few of the ARL libraries had written statements of objectives prior to 1970. However, of 64 libraries responding to a request for statements of objectives and goals made by the Systems and Procedures Exchange Center (SPEC) of ARL in June 1973, 24 respondees indicated that such a statement existed or that an initial statement was in preparation. Most of the written statements have been formulated or updated within the last three years.

In considering the possibility of setting goals and objectives, library administrators must resolve a number of broad questions, including:

- Is it worth the substantive time and effort required to develop a complete system of objectives and goals? What are the benefits?
- Must objectives setting be an on-going activity which regularly reviews and revises objectives to "reflect changes and developments?" If so, is it worth the commitment? If it is not an on-going process, will objectives inhibit change?
- Can statements of objectives be relevant to individual members of the staff or will they be seen as statements of the obvious?
- Do library staff have the necessary interest to participate in the objective setting process?

Establishing a system of objectives requires information and participation from many staffing levels within a library. It also requires a sense of current trends in higher education and management and an appreciation of the role of the parent institution. The following discussion reviews some current approaches to objectives setting.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF MISSION AND OVERALL OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

There is considerable similarity in the types of objectives identified in statements of mission and overall objectives. In isolating the operating parameters of the library, librarians usually respond to the parent institution's particular research and teaching requirements. This response typically includes these elements: to collect (select), preserve, organize, and provide intellectual and physical access to information; to select and develop necessary staff; to participate in cooperative programs; and to seek adequate funding to support the library program. Recognition of obligations for services or collections needed by the local community, the regional community, the scholarly community, and others beyond the primary service institution is often cited; however, in a general statement specific responsibilities, such as a particular area of collection development, are not usually indicated. The factors identified in objectives statements, whether explicitly or implicitly, comprise a composite description of the research library as a unique institution performing certain functions to fulfill both local institutional obligations and obligations to the general scholarly community. These obligations are seen as being met through a combination of the library's own resources and the library's participation in cooperative programs with other libraries and information centers. The means to be taken to work toward the fulfillment of broad objectives are sometimes indicated, but comprehensive, detailed programs have been developed only as part of intensive analysis programs such as those discussed later in this paper.

STIMULI LEADING TO THE SETTING OF OBJECTIVES

The nature of the impetus has had an important effect on the outcome of the objectives setting process. A self-motivated program which emphasizes staff involvement and the potential benefit to the library or an external request which leads to the conduct of a self-analysis program as the means for obtaining planning information are likely to be positive stimuli in generating staff interest and support.

An external stimulus frequently occurs in the form of a request by a state or institutional authority. The request may apply to all departments within the state or all units of an institution, but occasionally a library has been approached individually by the parent institution to undertake a self-analysis and planning program. The request will often be budget related, with the study intended to produce projections over a relatively long-term—five or ten years, for example.

Internal stimuli are often provided by library administrators or staff. Either group may be concerned with developing an objectives setting process as a sound management activity. But a staff-initiated request for a statement of objectives does not necessarily imply an appreciation of objectives as an integral part of management activity. That stimulus may, instead, be the felt need for a written statement of objectives as a source of information—a need related to the general desire to perceive the relationship between the activities of individuals and the activities of the organization.

Most stimuli for the recent concern among research libraries with stating objectives can be viewed as subfactors of planning. Creating, through planning, an environment in which change can occur as a creative force is essential to research libraries facing increased demands and continuing budgetary constraints. Whether the stimulus for stating objectives comes from within the library or from institutional forces outside the library, concern for rational resource allocation is paramount. Several successive years of restricted budgets for research libraries have made it apparent that a rational use of resources can be facilitated by clearly stated objectives and goals.

In addition to establishing and justifying financial allocations the stating of objectives can provide the library with a definition of its position, a rationale for decisions made and action taken, and a standard against which to measure performance. The ability to refer to a formulated, planned course of action can be especially helpful to the library in dealing rationally and contextually with both routine and unusual situations.

While many examples can be cited to illustrate libraries' response to internal and external stimuli, the following three illustrate the basic types:

Ohio State University Libraries

The Ohio State University Libraries undertook the formulation of objectives in 1970 upon the request of the President of the University; the library's activity was part of an effort to produce statements for all divisions and services of the University. The formulation process was undertaken by a staff committee which worked from February 1970, until March 1972, when the document was approved. That document is entitled "Public Service Objectives of the Ohio State University Libraries:" however, the title obscures the full scope of the document, as significant technical service objectives are included. The five-page document is essentially a statement of mission and overall objectives but includes references to broad quantifiable standards that could be applied, e.g., budget, staffing ratios, etc.

In addition to satisfying the President's request, the Ohio State University Libraries found that specifying objectives could help define the role of the libraries within the University, improve the library's position in the distribution of University funds, and serve as a point of reference in policy discussions. While an external request was the chief factor in triggering the formulation of the "Public Service Goals of the Ohio State University Libraries," the time spent on the document and the commitment engendered by the belief in the value of having stated objectives have convinced librarians at the University to continue developing the statement to make it an effective management tool. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Dr. Irene B. Hoadley, Assistant Director of Libraries, 1858 Neil Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210; telephone (614) 422-6151.

Syracuse University Library

In the spring of 1973 the Personnel Committee of the Faculty of the Libraries at Syracuse University requested that the library administration formulate objectives in connection with an effort to devise a performance-oriented system of personnel appraisal. A statement of overall objectives was produced by the Director of Libraries and the Assistant Directors and was subsequently amended through joint deliberation by the library administration and the Personnel Committee. While the task of deriving performance goals from the objectives has not yet been undertaken, the Personnel Committee is considering possible recommendations for the formulation of a system of objectives and performance goals that would in turn provide information for the desired process of personnel appraisal. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Richard J. Dionne, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York 13210.

Michigan State University Libraries

In 1971 the librarians of Michigan State University approved a statement of objectives and goals for the University Libraries formulated by a staff committee that included the Director of Libraries. The statement was produced in conjunction with University-wide activity to formulate statements of objectives that would be useful in the planning and budget process; the University activity was undertaken in conformity with planning activities within the State of Michigan.

The Michigan State University statement does not yet include performance goals but at the request of the Director of Libraries, several units are working on the development of more specific unit objectives and, eventually, performance goals. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Charles Rettke, Library Business and Personnel Manager, Michigan State University Libraries, East Lansing, Michigan 48823; telephone (517) 355-2341.

METHODS OF FORMULATION

The formulation of objectives occurs at many levels and in various ways. In some libraries the statement of objectives is formulated by the administration: by the director alone; by the director and his assistants; or by the assistants as a group. A second, common approach is for the library administration and the staff to formulate objectives jointly through a committee. A third approach is for the initial formulation to be undertaken by a staff committee with direction or at least final acceptance by the library administration.

The current trend is to involve the library administrators and the staff jointly or the staff alone in committee. These methods can help assure that statements of objectives are received by the staff in a spirit of cooperation and with a willingness to develop a system leading to implementation. In addition, these methods are most likely to be instrumental in making the objectives setting process an integral part of a library's development. The libraries of the University of Illinois and Florida State University and the Dallas Public Library illustrate several approaches to formulations:

University of Illinois Library

The "Statement of Goals and Objectives of the Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign" was formulated by a staff committee appointed by the University Librarian. The committee adopted the technique of specifying overall objectives and including and relating statements of policy and procedure that contribute to the advancing of the objectives. Upon the completion of the statement the committee was disbanded and a seven-member, standing Long-Range Planning Committee was appointed. That committee has involved itself with developing operational statements that would include short-range through long-range goals and will have responsibility for annually reviewing short-range and long-range plans and goals. Four subcommittees, comprised of 28 persons, exist to develop statements in the areas of collections, services, staffing and staff development, and quality and efficiency. Implementation of performance goals for library units and individuals is seen as the next step. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Lucien W. White, University Librarian, 230 Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois 61820; telephone (217) 333-0790.

Florida State University Library

"Library Goals and Objectives 1973-74" is a three-page statement prepared by the administration of the Florida State University Library. It is similar in format to annual statements that have been written for several years and to "Some Library Goals for the Next Five Years," a planning document completed in December, 1967.

"Library Goals and Objectives 1973-74" is a combination of overall objectives and performance goals. In some cases, quantifiable targets are set, e. g., "to add 100,000 volumes and to continue with at least this number annually." In other instances, general objectives are stated, e. g:, "Revision of the present salary structure." Implicit performance goals exist as successive annual statements evaluating the level of attainment of previously set objectives. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Ms. Frances Munson, Assistant Director for Administrative Services, Florida State University Library, Tallahassee, Florida 32306; telephone (904) 599-2215.

Dallas Public Library

The Dallas Public Library has recently made available a seven-page statement of objectives and goals. Entitled "Library Service Goals 1972-1982 for the Dallas Public Library," the statement is a broad planning document adopted by the library in December, 1972.

The formulation of "Library Service Goals 1972-1982 for the Dallas Public Library" spanned the last half of 1972. The library administration provided the initial direction and activity —including the formulation of the five main topics of the statement, and task forces developed position papers on the topics. A three-day retreat of representatives of the professional staff was held to discuss the goals; goals were altered and some discarded. At the conclusion of the retreat the participants voted on the goals to be included. Then every staff member, professional and clerical, was invited to group discussions in which the goals statement was reviewed word-by-word. Final changes in the document were made as a result of these discussions.

Copies of "Library Service Goals 1972-1982 for the Dallas Public Library" and additional information may be obtained by contacting Ms. Lillian Bradshaw, Director, Dallas Public Library, 1954 Commerce Street, Dallas, Texas 75201; telephone (124) 748-9071.

MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS

Many libraries have responded to the challenge of planning by undertaking systematic programs of analysis. These programs have resulted from various stimuli, including requests for planning activity by state or institutional agents and interest generated by the library itself.

In each of the analytical programs discussed here, the definition of the library's mission and the identification of overall objectives have been activities of early concern. Furthermore, it has been recognized that performance goals must be developed from the objectives to initiate a workable managerial system. While the specific planning program or analytical program has not always set out to develop performance goals, the need for such development has been established and the means to be taken has been specified or suggested.

Columbia University Libraries

Statements of mission and objectives for the Columbia University Libraries were developed as a consequence of the case study of the organization and staffing of the libraries done by Booz, Allen & Hamilton, Inc. and published in 1973. Prior to the report of the case study, the Columbia University Libraries had no systematic statement of objectives. Besides stressing the need for overall objectives, the case study emphasized the need to develop performance goals and performance measures; it suggested four categories of measures: elapsed time, user satisfaction, cost effectiveness, and staff attitudes and development. Recommendations included in the case study are being implemented on a priority basis. The full Columbia report has recently been published and is available: Booz, Allen & Hamilton, Inc.: *The Organization and Staffing of the Libraries of Columbia University: A Case Study*. 210 pp. Available from: Redgrave Information Resources Corporation, 53 Wilton Road, Westport, Connecticut 06880. $12.00.

Another publication, *The Administrative Organization of the Libraries of Columbia University: A Detailed Description* (New York, Columbia University Libraries, 1973; available from Alfred Lane, Columbia University Libraries, 535 W. 114th Street, New York, New York 10027. $5.00) provides descriptions for each library unit based on the study recommendations. The descriptions were developed by staff task forces and are designed to be working tools, subject to continual review and change, rather than rigid castings of the organization of the Columbia University Libraries. The unit descriptions include the title of the principal administrator, the parent unit, role, objectives, functions, key working relationships, reports produced, and performance and evaluative criteria. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Jerome Yavarkovsky, Assistant University Librarian for Planning, Columbia University Libraries, New York, New York 10027; telephone (212) 280-3823.

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Cornell University Libraries

With funding from the Council on Library Resources, the Cornell University Libraries undertook a systematic program aimed at long-range planning in 1972. The program drew on the facilities and the resources of the American Management Association and was conducted over several months. A statement of mission, overall objectives, and numerous specific goals for the Cornell University Libraries were formulated jointly by library administrators and representative staff members meeting at the AMA retreat center in December, 1972. In addition, specific goals were identified and the techniques for specifying annual, continuing objectives of units were established. The process of identifying, categorizing, and assigning levels of priority to objectives and goals continued in the libraries after the representatives to the retreat returned to Cornell.

An analysis of the Cornell Study has been published: William E. McGrath: *Development of a Long-Range Strategic Plan for a University Library; the Cornell Experience: Chronicle and Evaluation of the First Year's Effort*. 185 pp. Available from ERIC Document Reproduction Service, P.O. Drawer O, Bethesda, Maryland 20014. Hard copy $6.58; Microfiche $.65. Additional information may be obtained by contacting David Y. Sellers, Planning and Budget Officer, 201C Olin Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14850; telephone (607) 256-3961.

MANAGEMENT REVIEW AND ANALYSIS PROGRAM

The review and assessment of institutional and library objectives is a primary activity in the Management Review and Analysis Program (MRAP), developed by the Office of University Library Management Studies of the Association of Research Libraries with the support of the Council on Library Resources, Inc. As one of the Program's initial tasks, the library director prepares a statement of the library's mission and overall objectives; this statement is later used in a subsequent phase as a focal point for analysis and discussion.

During one phase of the study, a staff task force spends four weeks examining institutional and library objectives for the purposes of gathering information about relationships and functions and providing an understanding of the library's basic activities. This phase is intended to take the task force from the theoretical level of the mission statement through the development of applications at the operational level.

The following examples have been chosen to illustrate MRAP activities; additional information is available from the ARL University Library Management Studies Office.

Iowa State University Libraries

Prior to Iowa State University Library's participation in the MRAP, the stating of objectives had not been a formal process within the library, although some objectives had been stated in annual reports of the Director of Libraries. However, there had been interest in stating objectives and performance goals from the point of view of performance appraisal and the invitation to participate in the MRAP generated the expectation that in the course of the study, objectives would be stated.

During the management study a Personnel Information Guide was developed by a staff committee to define basic conditions of employment. The development of performance goals was included as part of this activity and has been endorsed by the library staff. As the program of performance appraisal is implemented, emphasis will be placed on where the library is going rather than what happened in the past. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Timothy A. Brown, Assistant Director for Administrative Services, Iowa State University Library, Ames, Iowa 50010; telephone (515) 294-1442.

University of Connecticut Libraries

Prior to the MRAP, the University of Connecticut Libraries did not have written objectives. Working with the statement provided by the Director of Libraries at the beginning of the MRAP, the Study Team selected three library units to experiment with the drafting of statements of objectives and goals as examples for other units. The final MRAP report is expected to include the objectives and goals of the Circulation Department as examples. A question of current concern that will condition implementation of performance goals is the extent to which departments see the process of objectives setting as useful.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Norman Stevens, Associate University Librarian, University of Connecticut Libraries, Storrs, Connecticut 06268; telephone (203) 486-2220.

University of Tennessee Libraries

In the course of their participation in the Management Review and Analysis Program, the University of Tennessee Library realized that the University had no written statement of objectives. For its purpose, the library formulated a working statement of University objectives that was reviewed and approved by the Vice Chancellor for Administration. Concurrently with the library's activity, the University formed a Role and Scope Committee.

Objectives had previously existed in the University of Tennessee Library but it was hoped that the MRAP would help to refine the objectives. Current activity includes the development of objectives and performance goals within departments. Additional information may be obtained by contacting George W. Shipman, Associate Director for Administration, University of Tennessee Libraries, Knoxville, Tennessee 37916; telephone (615) 974-4217.

University of Washington Libraries

One reason for the University of Washington Libraries' participation in the MRAP was to develop an approach to planning. Statements of objectives had previously existed in the library but performance goals had not been developed. The library's analysis and planning was paralleled by a decision by the University's administration to initiate the development of objectives, performance goals, and performance standards for all units. The library took advantage of the analytical activities of the MRAP to answer the University's request as well as to generate its own planning-related information. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Ms. Judy Barlup, Circulation Division, University of Washington Libraries, BL 10, Seattle, Washington 98195; telephone (206) 543-2553.

USE OF OBJECTIVES

Because most written statements of objectives have been formulated recently, conclusions about their applications and effectiveness can only be tentative. While mission and objectives statements have value, a statement that does not include performance goals may risk remaining a statement of intent rather than being the keystone in implementing a library's objectives program. However, because the process of setting performance goals can be costly and time-consuming, very little work has been done to develop explicit goals; and it can be concluded that the use of objectives as a management tool is not yet a fully developed process in library management.

The recognition of the need for performance goals to round out a system of objectives has been clearly stated in the management analysis projects discussed earlier in this *Supplement*. This need is based on the utility of objectives statements in the processes of planning, performance evaluation, and resource allocation, and the continuing process of dealing with the changing nature of academic and research libraries.

NOTE TO OUR READERS

The data for this Supplement is based on an analysis of 24 libraries' statements of objectives and information gathered in a telephone survey during the fall and winter of 1973. The project was done by Richard J. Dionne, as part of a council on Library Resources Fellowship.

The success of this publication is dependent upon the information made available to us. We hope our readers will share with us information regarding their activities and that the publication of this information will stimulate direct exchanges among those individuals working in the several areas described.

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